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### **Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

### **Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-24: (canceled)

Claim 25 (currently amended): Container comprising on at least one surface thereof an ink-only label ~~at least consisting of~~ comprising an adhesive layer ~~[[,]]~~ and an ink-only image layer ~~and optionally a protective layer~~, wherein the said ink-only label, when applied to a substrate, has a water permeability coefficient, ~~as defined herein~~, which is sufficient to enable fast removal of the label from the substrate with water or an aqueous alkaline solution, without destructive treatment of the said substrate, the label on the container having a pencil hardness between 1N and 7N in its dry state and a pencil hardness less than 0.5N after a soaking time between 1 and 15 minutes in water of 20°C.

Claim 26 (currently amended): Container ~~according to claim 25~~, comprising on at least one surface thereof an ink-only label comprising an adhesive layer and an ink-only image layer, wherein the said ink-only label, when applied to a substrate, has a water permeability coefficient which is sufficient to enable fast removal of the label from the substrate with water or an aqueous alkaline solution, without destructive treatment of the said substrate, wherein a cover layer is applied over the ink-only label which cover layer comprises an acrylic wax.

Claim 27 (previously presented): Container according to claim 25, comprising an application surface for receiving the label which application surface has a surface tension of at least 60 Ergs/cm<sup>2</sup>.

Claim 28 (canceled)

Claim 29 (currently amended): Container according to claim 25, wherein the label on the container has a water uptake value after 3 hours greater than 1 and below 75 g/m<sup>2</sup>; ~~preferably about 5 g/m<sup>2</sup>.~~

Claim 30 (previously presented): Container according to claim 25, the container having been selected from the group consisting of plastic crates, plastic bottles and glass bottles.

Claim 31 (currently amended): Process for applying a label to a container, said process comprising providing a transfer label, said transfer label comprising a backing layer and a transfer layer which is releasably attached to the backing layer, said transfer layer comprising an ink-only label, said ink-only label ~~at least consisting of~~ comprising an adhesive layer ~~[[,]]~~ and an ink-only image layer ~~and optionally a protective layer~~, wherein the said ink-only label, when applied to a substrate, has a water permeability coefficient, ~~as defined herein~~, which is sufficient to enable fast removal of the label from the substrate with water or an aqueous alkaline solution, without destructive treatment of the said substrate, said process further comprising the step of transferring the ink-only label to at least one surface of the container.

Claim 32 (currently amended): Process according to claim 31, wherein ~~the~~ a cover layer is attached upon or after attaching the ink-only label to the container.

Claim 33 (currently amended): Process according to claim 31, wherein the label; ~~optionally in combination with the cover layer~~, has been heat-treated after application to the container at a temperature between 40°C and 100°C.

Claim 34 (currently amended): Method of washing a container according to claim 25, comprising the steps of:

- placing the container in an aqueous soaking solution during a soaking time not longer than 10 min, ~~preferably not longer than 1 minute~~, the temperature of the soaking solution being below 100°C, ~~preferably below 70°C~~, while causing turbulence in the soaking solution such that the label breaks up,
- pumping the soaking solution through a sieve and collecting the piece of the label on the sieve,
- at least periodically, ~~preferably continuously~~, cleaning the sieve by collection and removal of the label pieces.

Claim 35 (currently amended): Method according to claim 34, wherein the openings of the sieve are between 1 mm and 10 mm, ~~preferably about 2 mm~~.

Claim 36 (previously presented): Method according to claim 34, comprising the step of impingement of water jets on the container before and/or after placing the container in the soaking solution.

Claim 37 (currently amended): Method according to claim 34, wherein the soaking solution comprises between 0.1 and 5% by weight, ~~preferably 0.5%~~ NaOH.

Claim 38 (new): Container according to claim 25, said ink-only label further comprising a protective layer.

Claim 39 (new): Process according to claim 31, said ink-only label further comprising a protective layer.

Claim 40 (new): Process according to claim 33, further comprising attaching a cover layer upon or after attaching the ink-only label to the container, wherein the heat-treatment has been performed on the label in combination with the cover layer.

Claim 41 (new): Container according to claim 25, said water permeability coefficient being defined as the amount of water that the label takes up, as a fraction of the dry weight of the label within a period of three hours immersion at 20°C.

Claim 42 (new): Process according to claim 31, said water permeability coefficient being defined as the amount of water that the label takes up, as a fraction of the dry weight of the label within a period of three hours immersion at 20°C.

Claim 43 (new): Container according to claim 26, said water permeability coefficient being defined as the amount of water that the label takes up, as a fraction of the dry weight of the label within a period of three hours immersion at 20°C.

Claim 44 (new): Container according to claim 26, said ink-only label further comprising a protective layer.

Claim 45 (new): Method according to claim 34, said sieve being continuously cleaned by collection and removal of the label pieces.

Claim 46 (new): Method according to claim 34, the soaking time being not longer than 1 minute.

Claim 47 (new): Method according to claim 34, the temperature of the soaking solution being below 70°C.

Claim 48 (new): Method according to claim 35, the openings of the sieve being about 2 mm.

Claim 49 (new): Method according to claim 37, the soaking solution comprising 0.5% NaOH.

Claim 50 (new): Process according to claim 31, the label on the container having a pencil hardness between 1N and 7N in its dry state and a pencil hardness less than 0.5N after a soaking time between 1 and 15 minutes in water of 20°C.